

Waste Wise Events Project – Case Study **Salt Carols under the Stars 2008**

The Event

The Salt Carols Under the Stars is an annual event organised by Salt Events in Kingscliff in the Tweed Shire Council area. Families are invited to bring a picnic dinner to share on the lawn in front of the outdoor stage in Salt Central Park. An expected crowd of around 2500 based on last year's event, was reduced slightly by some light rain in the early part of the evening.

This was the fourth year of the event and the second year that it has been run as a 'Waste Wise' event. Prior to 2007 all waste generated was sent to landfill but this year the event organiser Salt Events wanted to build on the achievements of 2007 to make the event more 'waste wise'.



Salt Carols under the Stars in 2007

The Challenge

The amount of waste generated at community/public events can be significant (about 1 litre/person/day), creating an unpleasant mess and substantial clean up costs for event organisers and councils. The north coast is host to approximately 300 events and 23 regular monthly markets each year. With many events attracting visitor numbers from the thousands to the tens of thousands the disposal of waste constitutes a major problem for councils. Many events in the region present unique challenges by attracting many visitors from outside the region. Communicating about waste & recycling systems must be simple and easy.

Outcomes & Opportunities

Planning for the 2008 Carols event was undertaken by the organisers with only minimal assistance from the NEWF. Reference was made to the WWE report recommendations from 2007 to improve this year's event. Waste Wise Management of the event resulted in a 36% reduction of waste to landfill through the capture of recyclable materials. Other outcomes included:

- Organisers requested that NEWF assist in educating visitors about how to bring a Waste Wise Picnic and provide a pre-event media statement to incorporate into their media coverage & put onto their website;
- The NEWF Coordinator provided a PA script for the organisers to broadcast during the event and the council 'Waste Wise banner – both to assist in promotion of the waste initiative to visitors.
- Non recyclable packaging generated was less than last year and contamination of the recycling stream was lower at 7%. This may have been due to better promotion of the waste minimisation message;
- The number of split bins provided (34) was more than doubled that of last year and was adequate for the event. This helped to reduce litter & contamination of the recycling stream;
- Although non flame candles, glow sticks and Santa hats were on sale again this year very few were found in the waste stream, indicating better reuse.

What Next with Waste?

Salt Village hosts a number of events over a year which will benefit from the findings and experiences of the Carols 08 event. Recommendations include:

- The use of separate 240L recycling & waste bins with lockable rosettes lids for the recycling bins;
- Complete a Waste Wise Management Plan (WWMP) to assist in setting objectives & targets and assigning roles and responsibilities;
- Continue to raise awareness about Low Waste Picnics and promote in the lead up to the event;
- Arrange a take back agreement with newspaper suppliers to avoid unused papers going into the bins;
- Consider the introduction of organic recycling;
- Promote your waste wise event as early and as widely as possible, in local media, event programs and in the Salt newsletter and on the website.

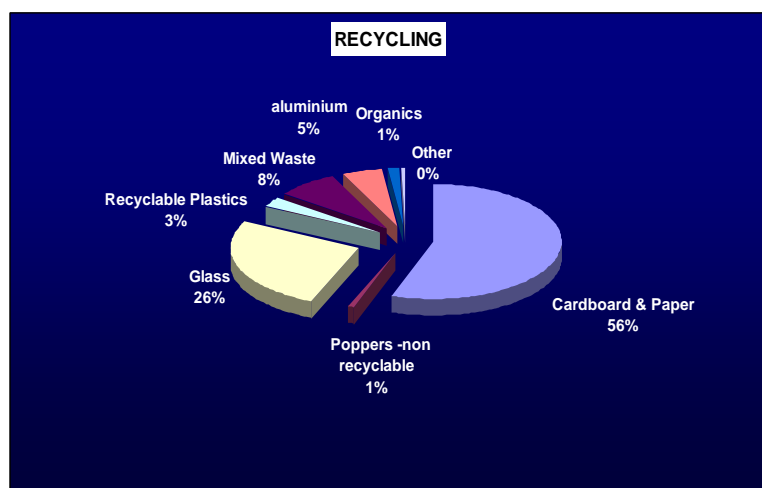
Results

A waste audit was conducted at the end of the event to allow a comparison with last years audit results and to assess any changes. In total an estimated 5.9 cubic meters or 690 kgs of waste and recycling was produced. Of this total approximately 2.13m³ or 247kgs of recyclables were diverted from landfill. This equates to 36% of the waste generated.

Recycling

The major components of the recycling stream were bundles of unused newspapers & cardboard at 56% (by vol). Glass bottles accounted for 26%, aluminium cans 5% and recyclable plastic containers 3%.

The contamination level was 7% by weight (or 10% by vol). The main contaminant was non recyclable plastic containers, bags and film (mixed waste), drink poppers and organics.



Waste

The waste bins contained an estimated 69% by volume (59% by weight) of recyclables including 40% paper & cardboard, 16% recyclable glass, 7% aluminium cans and 6% recyclable plastics.

Only 31% of the waste stream was actually waste (non recyclables) including plastic film, drink poppers, organics and 'other' waste (nappies, blue glass drink bottles and glow sticks).

Background

The North East Waste Forum (NEWF) is a collective of local councils working together to help reduce waste going to landfill in Northern NSW. The forum provides support for participating Councils, as well as advice and information to businesses and the general community in managing waste and implementing sustainable practices that reduce waste generation and promote the recovery of recyclable resources. The Waste Wise Events Project was initiated by NEWF in Oct 06 and focuses on reducing waste to landfill by implementing Waste Wise Management Plans (WWMP's). So far over 20 Waste Wise events have been organised across the region, including agricultural, sporting, family, food & music festivals with crowds ranging from 2,000 to 38,000.

Waste Wise Management Plan

The event organiser used the experiences and recommendations of the Carols 07 event to assist in the planning of Carols 08. Targets set for this event included:

Promotion of the waste systems

- Information on Salt website about Carols as a waste wise event and a link to the 'Low Waste Picnic' checklist;
- PA announcements during event
- Additional signs on bin lids to encourage; correct separation of waste and recycling
- Display TSC Waste Wise Event banner.

Packaging

- Food stall requested to use recyclable or biodegradable packaging.

Recovery Targets

- Recyclables including glass bottles, aluminium & steel cans, plastics 1, 2, 3, cardboard & paper;

Equipment & Bin Management

- 34 recycle / waste split bins located in pairs around the event area
- Waste audit conducted by NEWF
- Bins supplied and emptied by Solo Resource Recovery Services after event.



Newspapers & Glow Sticks found in the waste

Comparison to Previous Waste Wise Event

The most significant improvements from last year's event include:

- the diversion of recyclables from landfill was up from 30% to 36%;
- contamination of the recycling stream was down from 9% to 7%;
- a reduction in the amount of non recyclable or biodegradable food packaging;
- a reduction in the amount of disposable novelty items found in the waste.

Contacts

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